

Please Label Genetically Engineered Foods

Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

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Dear FDA Commissioner Jane Henney,

I am writing to ask your agency to require the mandatory labeling of all genetically engineered foods.

Recently, the FDA made public an internal report revealing that there is very strong consensus among Americans that genetically engineered foods should be labeled. "Virtually all [FDA study group] participants said that bioengineered foods should be labeled as such so that they could tell whether a given food was a product of the new technology," according to your study, as reported in the February 13, 2001 edition of the **Washington Post**. "They thought it would allow them to make more informed decisions about whether or not to buy a product."

Other public opinion polls confirm that the vast majority of Americans want genetically engineered foods labeled. (81% in a 1999 *Time* magazine poll.) Yet the FDA is allowing genetically engineered foods to come to market unlabeled, arguing that these foods are no different than those produced by typical hybridization. Studies, however, show crops modified by genetic engineering may contain increased levels of natural toxins and lower levels of valuable nutrients.

The FDA says that if a genetically engineered food contains a known allergen it must be labeled. But what about the unknown allergens that may be created in these experimental foods? Genetically engineered crops often contain proteins that have never before been consumed by humans as food. Further, there are serious questions about the safety of these crops for the environment. And people with certain ethical or religious beliefs worry about inadvertently eating genes from foods they would not knowingly consume.

Please, Commissioner Henney, support the will of the American people and label genetically engineered foods.

Sincerely,

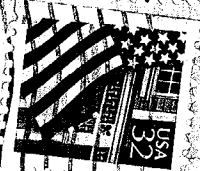


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